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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended): A method for inserting second content into first content, the first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer, the second content sent to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user, the method comprising:

intercepting a request on an intermediate computer to establish a connection with a second computer sent by the first computer;

establishing a first connection between the intermediate computer and the first computer and establishing a second connection between the intermediate computer and the second computer;

receiving a request in the intermediate computer for the first content sent by the user via the application running on the first computer;

sending the request for the first content from the intermediate computer to the second computer;

receiving in the intermediate computer a response from the second computer containing the first content;

sending the first content and the second content from the intermediate computer to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user;

searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the request for content sent by the application running on the first computer to the second computer wherein the second content is sent to the application running on the first computer only if

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a pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that second content should be sent to the first computer;
and

~~The method of claim 2 further comprising,~~ prior to searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion:

checking IP address information associated with the request;

if the IP address information does not match pre-determined IP address information to which a rule for insertion might apply, forwarding the requested content to the first computer without searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A method for inserting second content into first content, the first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer, the second content sent to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user, the method comprising:

intercepting a request on an intermediate computer to establish a connection with a second computer sent by the first computer;

establishing a first connection between the intermediate computer and the first computer and establishing a second connection between the intermediate computer and the second computer;

receiving a request in the intermediate computer for the first content sent by the user via the application running on the first computer;

sending the request for the first content from the intermediate computer to the second computer;

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receiving in the intermediate computer a response from the second computer containing the first content;

sending the first content and the second content from the intermediate computer to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user;

searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the response sent by the second computer containing the first content wherein the intermediate computer sends the second content to the first computer only if a pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that the second content should be sent to the first computer; and

~~The method of claim 4 further comprising,~~ prior to searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion:

checking IP address information associated with the response;

if the IP address information does not match pre-determined IP address information to which a rule for insertion might apply, forwarding the requested content to the first computer without searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion.

Claims 7-23 (canceled)

Claim 24 (currently amended): A system for inserting second content into first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer from a second computer, comprising:

an intermediate computer for monitoring communications between the first computer and the second computer;

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wherein a request for the first content sent by the application running on the first computer and received by the intermediate computer and sent to the second computer by the intermediate computer, and

a response sent from the second computer containing the first content that is received by the intermediate computer and sent with the second content to the application running on the first computer to be received by the user;

a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the request for content sent by the first computer to the second computer wherein the second content is sent to the first computer only if the pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that the second content should be sent to the first computer;

~~The system of claim 21 further comprising:~~

means for checking IP address information associated with the request; and

means for, if the IP address information does not match pre-determined IP address information to which a rule for insertion might apply, forwarding the requested content to the first computer without invoking the means for searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion.

Claim 25 (currently amended): A system for inserting second content into first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer from a second computer, comprising:

an intermediate computer for monitoring communications between the first computer and the second computer;

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wherein a request for the first content sent by the application running on the first computer and received by the intermediate computer and sent to the second computer by the intermediate computer, and

a response sent from the second computer containing the first content that is received by the intermediate computer and sent with the second content to the application running on the first computer to be received by the user;

means for searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the response sent by second computer containing the first content;

means for sending the second content is sent to the first computer only if a pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that the second content should be sent to the first computer;

~~The system of claim 23 further comprising:~~

means for checking IP address information associated with the response; and

means for, if the IP address information does not match pre-determined IP address information to which a rule for insertion might apply, forwarding the requested content to the first computer without invoking the means for searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion.

Claim 26 (canceled)

Claim 27 (previously presented): A method for delivering second content to a user via an application running on a first computer who has requested first content over the Internet from a second computer the second content received by the application running on the first computer before the first computer receives the first content, the method comprising:

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intercepting in an intermediate computer a request to establish a connection with the second computer sent by the application running on the first computer;

establishing a connection between the first computer and the intermediate computer;

establishing a connection between the second computer and the intermediate computer;

receiving in the intermediate computer a first request for the first content sent by the application running on the first computer, wherein the intermediate computer does not send the first request for the first content to the second computer;

delivering the second content to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user and via the intermediate computer;

receiving in the intermediate computer a re-request for the first content from the application running on the first computer, wherein the re-request for the first content from the application running on the first computer occurs after delivery of the second content to the first computer;

sending the re-request for the first content from the intermediate computer to the second computer after delivery of the second content to the first computer, wherein establishing the connection between the second computer and the intermediate computer occurs in response to the re-request for the first content from the first computer;

receiving in the intermediate computer the first content from the second computer;

and

sending the first content to the application running on the first computer.

Claim 28 (original): The method of claim 27 further comprising:

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searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the request sent by the first computer to the second computer;

wherein the second content is sent to the first computer only if a pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that the second content should be sent to the first computer.

Claim 29 (original): The method of claim 28 wherein searching for a pre-determined rule is performed prior to forwarding the request to the second computer.

Claim 30 (previously presented): A device for delivering second content to a user running an application on a first computer that has requested first content over the Internet from a second computer, the second content being received by the user before the user receives the first content comprising:

an intermediate computer connected with the first computer and that intercepts a request to establish a connection with the second computer sent by the first computer and establishes a connection with the second computer, wherein a request for the first content sent by the first computer is received by the intermediate computer; and

means for delivering the second content to the first computer,

wherein the intermediate computer establishes the connection with the second computer after the second content has been delivered to the first computer and in response to a re-request for the first content sent from the application running on the first computer, and the first content is received by the intermediate computer from the second computer in response to the re-request for the first content and forwarded to the user running the application on the first computer.

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Claim 31 (previously presented): The device of claim 30 further comprising:

a pre-determined rule for insertion based on the information contained in the request sent by the first computer to the second computer,

wherein the second content is sent to the first computer only if the pre-determined rule for insertion indicates that the second content should be sent to the first computer.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The device of claim 31 wherein the intermediate computer performs the searching for a pre-determined rule prior to forwarding the request to the second computer.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The device of claim 31 further comprising:

means for checking IP address information associated with the request; and

means for, if the IP address information does not match pre-determined IP address information to which a rule for insertion might apply, forwarding the requested content to the first computer without searching for a pre-determined rule for insertion.

Claim 34 (currently amended): A device for inserting second content into first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer from a second computer and sent by the second computer over the Internet to the application running on the first computer comprising:

an intermediate computer for monitoring communications between the first computer and the second computer;

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in the intermediate computer, means for receiving a request for the first content sent by the application running on the first computer;

forwarding means in the intermediate computer for checking for first criteria in the request for first content, communicating information associated with the request for first content to a filtering means if the first criteria matches first pre-determined criteria indicating that a rule for insertion might apply to the request for first content, and forwarding the request to the second computer without further processing if the first criteria does not match the first pre-determined criteria;

the filtering means being for checking for second criteria in the request for first content, communicating information associated with the request for first content to a content insertion means if the second criteria matches second pre-determined criteria indicating that a rule for insertion might apply to the request for first content, and triggering forwarding of the request for first content without further processing if the second criteria does not match the second pre-determined criteria; and

the content insertion means being for triggering sending of the second content to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user and with the first content if the request for first content matches a pre-determined rule triggering insertion, ~~wherein the second content is provided to the first computer independent of a display size of the first computer.~~

Claim 35 (currently amended): A device for inserting second content into first content requested over the Internet by a user via an application running on a first computer from a second computer and sent by the second computer over the Internet to the application running on the first computer comprising:

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an intermediate computer for monitoring communications between the first computer and the second computer;

means in the intermediate computer for receiving a response sent by the second computer responsive to the request for first content sent by the application running on the first computer;

forwarding means in the intermediate computer for checking for first criteria in the response, communicating information associated with the response to a filtering means if the first criteria matches first pre-determined criteria indicating that a rule for insertion might apply to the response, and forwarding the response to the application running on the first computer without further processing if the first criteria does not match the first pre-determined criteria;

the filtering means for checking for second criteria in the response, communicating information associated with the response to a content insertion means if the second criteria matches second pre-determined criteria indicating that a rule for insertion might apply to the response, and triggering forwarding of the request for first content without further processing if the second criteria does not match the second pre-determined criteria; and

the content insertion means being for triggering sending of the second content to the application running on the first computer for receipt by the user and with the first content if the response matches a pre-determined rule triggering insertion, ~~wherein the second content is provided to the first computer independent of a display size of the first computer.~~

Claims 36-44 (canceled)